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Agent Under 'False Flag,' Not Israel's, U.S. Suspects

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WASHINGTON—U.S. officials said Friday that they are examining the possibility that a U.S. intelligence analyst arrested Thursday after trying to flee to the Israeli Embassy actually was spying for another country.

While the State Department said that the United States is "shocked and saddened by the notion" that Israel might be involved in espionage in this country, intelligence and law-enforcement officials cited suspicions that the curious case may involve "false flag" recruitment—a technique in which one country dupes a spy into thinking that he is working for another.

Jonathan Pollard, 31, a mid-level civilian employee of the Naval Investigative Service, was arrested Thursday after he swerved his car into the Israeli Embassy grounds. He was under surveillance by the

FBI, which had questioned him earlier in the week.

The Pentagon said Friday that Pollard had worked as an analyst in the investigative service's counterterrorism alert center, which provides warnings and information on potential terrorist activity against Navy facilities worldwide.

Pollard is being held without bail and is charged with supplying defense secrets to agents for a foreign government. The country he allegedly served was not identified in court papers, but sources in three federal agencies said it was Israel, which shares extensive intelligence with the United States.

On Friday, as other intelligence and diplomatic officials expressed surprise that Israel might be involved in the case, one Administration source said "There are some

indications he (Pollard) may have been a 'false flag.'"

According to intelligence analysts and historians, the Soviet KGB has used the "false flag" technique when a spy it was recruiting would never knowingly work for the Kremlin.

The source who raised the "false flag" possibility said "there's an association with Israel. The fact that he fled to the embassy shows that. But all that proves is that he thought he was working for them."

But another source close to the investigation scoffed at the suggestion. "That's disinformation, being put out by the Mossad," he said, referring to the Israeli intelligence service. "There's no reason to disbelieve the objective facts."

But four other law enforcement sources said they have not ruled out the possibility that Pollard had been duped into thinking he was working for Israel by another country that actually received the classified documents he obtained.

"We can't exclude that possibility," one source said, "but it still looks like Israel."

Pollard sold sensitive documents and codes taken from the Naval Investigative Service for slightly less than \$50,000, according to one source familiar with the investigation. When confronted by naval and FBI agents earlier this week,

the source said, Pollard told them he was supplying classified information to Pakistan. The source added that authorities have not corroborated this.

One Administration official, asked whether the information was going to Pakistan or to Arab countries, replied: "None of them. It'd be the bad guys," referring to the Soviet Union or Soviet Bloc countries.

After questioning Pollard earlier, FBI agents did not immediately arrest him because he indicated that he would cooperate, one law-enforcement source said.

This source added that Pollard contacted the Israeli Embassy and said he wanted asylum but that he

was being followed by the FBI. According to this source, Pollard was told to "shake your surveillance and we'll see."

Federal officials said that the role of Pollard's wife, Ann, is still "a question mark," and that they are looking into the possibility that others could be involved, as well.

At the State Department, spokesman Charles Redman said: "In view of the fact that he was arrested leaving the Israeli Embassy, the circumstances concerning his presence at that location are being actively investigated.

"We are shocked and saddened at the notion that something like this might occur," Redman added. "We have been in touch with the Israelis to try to get to the bottom

of this. We don't have all the facts."

Pollard went to work for a naval intelligence field office in 1979, eventually moving in 1984 to Naval Investigative Service headquarters at a time when the center's staff

was being increased in the wake of the terrorist bombing that killed 261 U.S. servicemen in Beirut.

In South Bend, Ind., where he grew up and where his father is a renowned cancer researcher at the University of Notre Dame, his mother was quoted as saying that she was distressed about his arrest. "I am frozen," she said. "I think there is something worse than cancer."